

I CLAIM:

1. A fold flat vehicle seat comprising:

a movable track member slidably engaging a fixed track member having a seat assembly mounted thereon for longitudinal sliding movement of said movable track member and said seat assembly relative to said fixed track member along a longitudinal axis;

a track lock means operatively interconnected between said movable and fixed track members and movable between a locked configuration whereat said movable track member is precluded from moving longitudinally relative to said fixed track member and a released configuration whereat said movable track member is permitted to move longitudinally relative to said fixed track member;

wherein said seat assembly includes a seat cushion member mounted on said movable track member and a seatback member mounted on said seat cushion member for forward folding about a seatback pivot axis between a substantially upright occupiable design position and a substantially horizontal load supporting position;

a seatback member latch means operatively engaged between said seatback member and said seat cushion member to selectively control said forward folding of said seatback member;

a link arm member having an upper end and a lower end and being operatively mounted adjacent its upper end on said seatback member, for movement with said seatback member between a lowered track engagement position corresponding to said substantially horizontal load supporting position of said seatback member, and a raised track clearing position corresponding to said substantially upright occupiable design position of said seatback member; and,

a link engaging portion disposed on said fixed track member for receiving the lower end of said link arm member when said seat assembly is in a predetermined rear longitudinal position;

wherein, when said link arm member is in said lowered track engagement position and only then, said link arm member interacts with said link engaging portion of said fixed track member to permit said forward folding of said seatback member to said substantially horizontal load supporting position and to thereat preclude longitudinal motion of said seat assembly relative to said fixed track member, so as to retain said seat assembly in said predetermined rear longitudinal position.

2. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 1, wherein said link engaging portion comprises a slot formed in an upwardly facing lower horizontal surface of said fixed track member.

3. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 2, wherein, when said link arm member is in said lowered track engagement position, the lower end of said link arm member is disposed in said slot.

4. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 3, wherein, when said seat assembly has been removed from said predetermined rear longitudinal position, and said seatback member has been folded toward said substantially horizontal load supporting position, the lower end of said link arm member slidingly engages said upwardly facing lower horizontal surface of said fixed track member, so as to preclude said link arm member from moving to said lowered track engagement position, thereby to preclude said seatback member from being forwardly folded to said substantially horizontal load supporting position.

5. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 4, wherein said link arm member is mounted at its upper end on said seatback member for pivotal movement by means of a mounting pin.

6. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 5, wherein said mounting pin is disposed at said seatback pivot axis.

7. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 6, wherein said seatback member has a forwardly tilted easy entry position disposed angularly between said substantially upright occupiable design position and said substantially horizontal load supporting position, whereat said track lock means has moved to its released configuration to permit said longitudinal sliding movement of said movable track member and said seat assembly relative to said fixed track member, and wherein said link arm member is in said raised track clearing position.

8. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 7, further comprising a drive plate pivotally mounted on said seatback member for pivotal movement about said seatback pivot axis with said seatback member between a initial position corresponding to the easy entry position of said seatback member and a final position corresponding to said substantially horizontal load supporting position of said seatback member.

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9. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 8, further comprising a drive slot formed in said drive plate.

10. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 9, wherein said link arm member further comprises a driven pin mounted adjacent said upper end thereof, said driven pin being engaged in said drive slot of said drive plate, wherein said drive plate drives

said driven pin to thereby move said link arm member to said lowered track engagement position.

11. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 10, wherein said drive slot has an upper end and an lower end.

12. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 11, wherein said driven pin is disposed at said upper end of said drive slot when said seatback member is in said substantially upright occupiable design position through said easy entry position and is disposed at said lower end of said drive slot when said seatback member is in said substantially horizontal load supporting position.

13. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 12, wherein said seatback member has a drive pin securely mounted thereon in offset relation with respect to said seatback pivot axis, and said drive plate has a lost motion slot that receives said drive pin for travel therein, such that when said seatback member is in said easy entry position, said drive pin engages said drive pin engaging surface.

14. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 13, wherein, when said seatback member is forwardly folded from said easy entry position to said substantially horizontal load supporting position, said drive pin engages said drive pin engaging surface, so as to move said drive plate from said initial position to said

final position, thereby moving said link arm member from said raised track clearing position to said lowered track engagement position.

15. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 14, wherein said link arm member has a motion accommodating slot adjacent said upper end, which motion accommodating slot receives said mounting pin therein.

16. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 15, further comprising a locking cam member pivotally mounted on said moveable seat track member for movement between a locking position whereat said locking cam member permits said track lock member to move to said locked configuration and a releasing position whereat said locking cam member moves said track lock means to said released configuration.

17. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 16, wherein said locking cam member is operatively connected to said drive plate for corresponding movement therewith, such that said drive plate effects movement of said locking cam member from said releasing position to said locking position as said drive plate moves from said initial position to said final position.

18. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 17, wherein said locking cam member is operatively connected to said drive plate by means of a sheathed cable.

19. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 18, further comprising a first lever arm pivotally mounted on said movable track member for movement between a releasing position whereat said first lever arm causes said track lock means to move to said released configuration and a locking position whereat said first lever arm permits said track lock means to move to said locked configuration.

20. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 19, wherein said first lever arm is operable by means of a sheathed cable member operatively connected between said first lever arm, and wherein forward folding movement of said seatback member a threshold distance from said substantially upright occupiable design position toward said substantially horizontal load supporting position causes said first lever arm to move correspondingly from said locking position to said releasing position.

21. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 20, further comprising a second lever arm pivotally mounted on said movable track member for movement between an hold-open position whereat said second lever arm retains said first lever arm in said locking position and a start position whereat said second lever

arm permits said first lever arm to move to said releasing position.